

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An assembly for attaching a fence rail to a support
5 structure, said assembly comprising:

a bracket configured to be attached to said support structure and to receive said fence rail therein;

a retention clip for attaching to said fence rail and to said bracket; and

10 a cap for removable attachment to said bracket;

wherein said cap covers said retention clip when said cap is attached to said bracket and said bracket is attached to said support structure, such that said retention clip is hidden from view.

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2. The assembly of claim 1, further comprising means for attaching said bracket to said support structure.

20 3. The assembly of claim 2, wherein said means for attaching said bracket to said support structure comprises at least one opening in said bracket for receiving a fastener.

4. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said bracket comprises a back wall.

5. The assembly of claim 4, wherein said bracket further
5 comprises a first wall, a second wall and a bottom wall
disposed on said back wall for receiving said fence rail.

6. The assembly of claim 4, wherein said bracket
comprises a catch disposed on said back wall for engagement
10 with said retention clip.

7. The assembly of claim 6, wherein said catch comprises
at least one complementary tooth.

15 8. The assembly of claim 6, wherein said back wall
comprises a recessed area surrounding said catch to form a
space for receiving said retention clip.

9. The assembly of claim 5, wherein said first wall and
20 said second wall each comprise a groove for engagement with
said cap.

10. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said retention clip comprises a first portion comprising a wall, said wall having an aperture formed therein to define opposing resilient prongs.

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11. The assembly of claim 10, wherein said opposing resilient prongs each have at least one tooth formed thereon for engaging said bracket.

10 12. The assembly of claim 10, wherein said retention clip further comprises a second portion, said second portion having means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail.

15 13. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail comprises an opening in said retention clip for receiving a fastener.

20 14. The assembly of claim 13, wherein said opening in said retention clip is substantially oval shaped.

15. The assembly of claim 13, wherein said second portion further comprises a recessed area surrounding said opening for receiving said fastener.

5 16. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said first portion and said second portion form a substantial "L" shape.

17. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said cap comprises a top wall and opposing side walls.

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18. The assembly of claim 17, wherein said opposing side walls comprise ridges for engaging with said bracket.

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19. An assembly for attaching a fence rail to a support structure, said assembly comprising:

a bracket configured to be attached to said support structure and to receive said fence rail therein, said bracket including a catch; and

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a retention clip for attaching to said fence rail to attach said fence rail to said bracket, said retention clip having at least one resilient prong for receiving said catch;

wherein said at least one resilient prong is configured to deflect to receive said catch and fasten said fence rail to said bracket.

5 20. The assembly of claim 19, further comprising means for attaching said bracket to said support structure.

10 21. The assembly of claim 20, wherein said means for attaching said bracket to said support structure comprises at least one opening in said bracket for receiving a fastener.

22. The assembly of claim 19, wherein said bracket comprises a back wall.

15 23. The assembly of claim 22, wherein said bracket further comprises a first wall, a second wall and a bottom wall disposed on a front side of said back wall for receiving said fence rail.

20 24. The assembly of claim 23, wherein said catch is disposed on a rear side of said back wall.

25. The assembly of claim 19, wherein said resilient prong comprises at least one tooth and said catch comprises at least one complementary tooth.

5 26. The assembly of claim 22, wherein said back wall comprises a recessed area surrounding said catch to form a space for receiving said retention clip.

10 27. The assembly of claim 23, wherein said first wall and said second wall each comprise a groove for engagement with a cap.

15 28. The assembly of claim 19, wherein said retention clip comprises a first portion comprising a wall, said wall having an aperture formed therein to define said at least one resilient prong.

20 29. The assembly of claim 28, wherein said retention clip further comprises a second portion, said second portion having means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail.

30. The assembly of claim 29, wherein said means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail comprises an opening in said retention clip for receiving a fastener.

5 31. The assembly of claim 30, wherein said opening in said retention clip is substantially oval shaped.

10 32. The assembly of claim 29, wherein said second portion further comprises a recessed area surrounding said opening for receiving said fastener.

33. The assembly of claim 29, wherein said first portion and said second portion form a substantial "L" shape.

15 34. The assembly of claim 19, further comprising a cap for removable attachment to said bracket, wherein said cap covers said retention clip when said cap is attached to said bracket and said bracket is attached to said support structure, such that said retention clip is hidden from view

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35. The assembly of claim 34, wherein said cap comprises a top wall and opposing side walls.

36. The assembly of claim 35, wherein said opposing side walls comprise ridges for engaging with said bracket.

37. A retention clip for receiving a catch to attach a
5 fence rail to a support structure, said retention clip comprising:

a first portion comprising a wall, said wall having an aperture formed therein to define opposing resilient prongs, said opposing resilient prongs each having at least one tooth
10 formed thereon for engaging said catch;

a second portion, said second portion having means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail; wherein said retention clip is configured to receive said catch between said opposing resilient prongs to attach said
15 fence rail to said support structure.

38. The retention clip of claim 37, wherein said first portion and said second portion form a substantial "L" shape.

20 39. The retention clip of claim 37, wherein said means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail comprises an opening for receiving a fastener.

40. The retention clip of claim 39, wherein said opening is substantially oval shaped.

41. The retention clip of claim 39, wherein said second portion further comprises a recessed area surrounding said opening for receiving said fastener.

42. The retention clip of claim 37, wherein said at least one tooth comprises two teeth.

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43. A bracket for attaching a fence rail to a support structure, said fence rail having a retention clip disposed on an end thereof, said bracket comprising:

a back wall having a front face and a rear face;
15 a rail support extending from said front face of said back wall for receiving said fence rail; and
a catch disposed on said rear face of said back wall for engaging with said retention clip;

wherein said bracket is configured to be attached to said support structure such that engagement of said retention clip with said catch attaches said fence rail to said support structure.

44. The bracket of claim 43, wherein said bracket further comprises means for attaching said bracket to said support structure.

5 45. The bracket of claim 44, wherein said means for attaching said bracket to said support structure comprises at least one opening for receiving a fastener.

10 46. The bracket of claim 43, wherein said back wall further comprises at least one edge projecting from said rear face surrounding said at least one opening.

47. The bracket of claim 43, wherein said rail support comprises a bottom wall.

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48. The bracket of claim 47, wherein said bottom wall comprises a mouth for receiving a vertical fence member.

20 49. The bracket of claim 47, wherein said rail support further comprises a first side wall and a second side wall to form a substantial "U" shape with said bottom wall.

50. The bracket of claim 49, wherein said first side wall and said second side wall each comprise a groove for receiving a ridge to attach a cap to said bracket.

5 51. The bracket of claim 43, wherein said back wall comprises a recessed area surrounding said catch to form a space for receiving said retention clip.

52.. A method for attaching a fence rail to a support structure, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) attaching a bracket to the support structure;
- (b) attaching a retention clip to the fence rail;
- (c) inserting said fence rail within said bracket;
- (d) engaging the retention clip with the bracket to attach the fence rail to the bracket; and
- (e) placing a cap on the bracket to cover the retention clip.

53. The method of claim 52, wherein step (a) comprises inserting at least one screw through said bracket into the support structure.

54. The method of claim 52, wherein step (b) comprises attaching said retention clip on an end of said fence rail.

55. The method of claim 52, wherein step (b) further
5 comprises inserting a screw through said retention clip and said fence rail.

56. The method of claim 52, wherein step (c) comprises inserting said fence rail within an opening defined by a
10 plurality of walls of said bracket.

57. The method of claim 52, wherein step (d) comprises engaging the retention clip with a catch disposed on said bracket.

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58. The method of claim 57, wherein step (d) further comprises inserting said catch between resilient prongs of said retention member.

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59. The method of claim 58, wherein step (d) further comprises engaging at least one tooth on said resilient prongs with a complementary tooth on said catch.

60. The method of claim 52, wherein step (e) comprises inserting at least one ridge formed on said cap within at least one groove formed on said bracket.

5 61. A method for attaching a fence rail to a support structure, said method comprising the steps of:

10 (a) forming a bracket having a back wall, said back wall having a front face and an opposing rear face, said back wall further comprising a rail support extending from said front face of said back wall for receiving said fence rail;

 (b) attaching said bracket to said support structure such that said rear face faces said support structure;

 (c) attaching a retention clip to the fence rail; and

15 (d) inserting said fence rail in said rail support such that said retention clip resides between said rear face and said support structure to attach said fence rail to said bracket.

20 62. The method of claim 61, wherein step (b) comprises inserting at least one fastener through said back wall.

63. The method of claim 61, wherein step (c) comprises inserting at least one fastener through said retention clip.

64. The method of claim 61, further comprising step (e) engaging at least one resilient prong disposed on said retention member with a catch disposed on said rear face of said back wall.

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65. The method of claim 61, further comprising (f) placing a cap on said bracket to cover said retention clip.

66. The method of claim 65, further comprising inserting 10 at least one ridge formed on said cap within at least one groove formed on said bracket.

67. An assembly for attaching a fence rail to a support structure, said assembly comprising:

15 a bracket configured to be attached to said support structure and to receive said fence rail therein, wherein said bracket comprises a back wall, and wherein said bracket further comprises a first side wall, a second side wall and a bottom wall disposed on said back wall for receiving said 20 fence rail;

a retention clip for attaching to said fence rail and to said bracket;

a cap for removable attachment to said bracket;

means for attaching said bracket to said support structure, wherein said means for attaching said bracket to said support structure comprises at least one opening in said bracket for receiving a first fastener;

5 wherein said bracket further comprises a catch disposed on said back wall for engagement with said retention clip;

 wherein said catch comprises at least one complementary tooth;

 wherein said back wall comprises a recessed area
10 surrounding said catch to form a space for receiving said retention clip;

 wherein said first side wall and said second side wall each comprise a groove for engagement with said cap;

 wherein said retention clip comprises a first portion
15 having an aperture formed therein to define opposing resilient prongs;

 wherein said opposing resilient prongs each have at least one tooth formed thereon for engaging said at least one complementary tooth;

20 wherein said retention clip further comprises a second portion, said second portion having means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail;

wherein said means for attaching said retention clip to said fence rail comprises an opening in said retention clip for receiving a second fastener;

wherein said opening in said retention clip is
5 substantially oval shaped;

wherein said second portion of said retention clip further comprises a recessed area surrounding said opening in said retention clip for receiving said second fastener;

wherein said first portion of said retention clip and
10 said second portion of said retention clip form a substantial "L" shape;

wherein said cap comprises a top wall and opposing side walls;

wherein said opposing side walls in said cap comprise
15 ridges for engaging with said groove in said first side wall and said second side wall of said bracket; and

wherein said cap covers said second portion of said retention clip when said retention clip is attached to said fence rail and said fence rail is attached to said bracket and
20 said cap is attached to said bracket, such that said second portion of said retention clip is hidden from view.